THE SALT LAKE HERALD.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SUNDAY, JUNE 24, 1906

MAGAZINE SECTION.

George Ade IN... PASTURES NEW

Mr. Peasley

And His Final Size-Up of Egypt

BY GEORGE ADE.

On the morning of our hurried pack up and get away from Luxor we lost Mr. Peasley. It was a half hour before the sailing of the boat, and we were attempting to lock trunks, call in the porters, give directions as to forwarding mail and tip everybody except the proprietor all at the same time.

This excruciating crisis comes with every departure. The fear of missing the boat, the lurking suspicion that several articles have been left in lower drawers or under the sofa, the dread of overlooking some worthy menial who is entitled to baksheesh, the uneasy conviction that the bill contains several overcharges—all these combine to produce a mental condition about half way between plain "rattles" and female hysteria. And then, to add to the horror of the situation, Mr. Peasley had disappeared.

All hands were needed—one to boss the porters, another to round up the tippees, another to audit the charges for "extras," another to make a final search for razor strops and hot water bags (of which we had left a trail from Chicago to Cairo). Instead of attending to these really important duties we were loping madly about the hotel looking for Peasley. We asked one another why we had invited him to join the party. We called him all the names that we had invented on the trip to fit his unusual personality. One of these was a "flat headed fush." I don't know what a "fush" is, but the more you study it and repeat it over to yourself the more horrible becomes the full significance of the word. Also we called him a "swozzie," which means a chump who has gone on and on, exploring the furthermost regions of idiocy, until even his most daring companions are left far behind. We called Mr. Peasley a "wall eyed spingo," the latter being a mullet that has lost all sense of shame. Ordinary abuse and profanity became weak and ineffective when pitted against words of this scathing nature.

Reader, if you have a life-long friend and you feel reasonably sure that you never could quarrel with him or be out of patience with him or find fault with any of his small peculiarities, go on a long trip with him in foreign lands. You will be together so much of the time that finally each will begin to hate the sight of the other. There will come off days, fraught with petty annoyances, when each will have a fretful desire to hurl cameras and suit cases at his beloved playmate. Suppose your lifelong friend has some little eccentricity of manner or speech, some slight irregularity of behavior at the table or a perverted and stubborn conviction which reveals itself in every controversy. You may have overlooked this defect for years because you met him only at intervals, but when you begin to camp with him you discover every one of his shining faults. And how they do get on your nerves! Next to matrimony, perhaps, traveling together is the most severe test of compatibility.

We liked Mr. Peasley. Looking back over the trip, we can well believe that the expedition would have been rather tame if deprived of his cheering presence. But he was so full of initiative and so given to discovering byways of adventure that he was always breaking in on the programme and starting little excursions of his own. He was a very hard man to mobilize. If we had solemnly agreed to get together for luncheon at 1 o'clock, three of us would be waiting at the food garage while Mr. Peasley would be a mile away, trying to buy a $4 Abyssinian war shield for $2.75.

And where do you suppose he was on the morning we were making our frenzied departure from Luxor? We found him in the barber shop, having his hair cut! A native stood alongside of him, brushing away the flies. The barber, a curly Italian, had ceased work when we came in, and encouraged by the questions of Mr. Peasley, was describing the Bay of Naples, pointing out Capri, Sorrento, Vesuve and other points of interest, with a comb in one hand and a pair of scissors in the other. This barber had made an indelible impression on Mr. Peasley, because of his name, which was Signor Mosquito. Mr. Peasley said he didn't see how any one with a name like that could live.

We lined up in front of Mr. Peasley and gazed at him in withering silence. He was not feazed.

"Talk about Oriental luxury," he said. "Little did I think twenty years ago, when I was measurin' unbleached muslin and drawin' New Orleans syrup in a country store, that one day I'd recline on a spotted divan and have a private vassal to keep the flies off of me. To say nothing of bein' waited on by Signor Mosquito."

I tried to hold down the safety valve of my wrath.

"We have just held a meeting and by unanimous vote we have decided that you are an irresponsible fush, a night blooming swozzie and a vitrified spingo," I said.

"Thanks," he replied. "I'll do as much for you some time."

"Are you aware of the fact that the boat departs in twenty minutes?" asked No. 2.

"The boat will not leave its mooring until Peasley of Iowa is safely aboard," he replied. "Why is it that you fellows begin to throw duck fits every time we have to catch a boat or train? Kindly send my luggage aboard, and as soon as Signor Mosquito has concluded his amputations I will join you."

Words failed us. We hurried to the boat, feeling reasonably certain that he would follow us to Assonan by rail. When it came time to cast off, Mr. Peasley had not appeared, and our irritation was gradually softening unto a deep joy. The warning whistle blew twice and then Mr. Peasley came down the bank, carrying a Nubian spear eight feet long over his shoulder. By the time he had arrived on the upper deck the gangplank was drawn and we were swinging in the current.

He bestowed on us a cool smile of triumph and then removed his hat. His head had been given a sheilac finish and smelled like the front of a drug store.

"Signor Mosquito is well named," said Mr. Peasley. "When he got through with me he stung me for fifteen plasters."

For several hours we refused to speak to him or sit near him on deck, but finally we needed him to fill out a four-handed game of dominoes and he was taken back on probation. While we were engaged in a very stubborn session of "double nines" we noticed that most of our fellow passengers, and especially those of English persuasion, were making our little group the target for horrified glances. Some of them actually glared at us. We began to wonder if dominoes was regarded as an immoral practice in Egypt.

"These people keep on looking at us as if we were a happy band of burglars," said Mr. Peasley. "We think we are traveling incog, but our reputation has preceded us."

Then we heard one old lady ask another if there would be any evening services in the dining saloon, and Mr. Peasley, who was reaching into the "bone yard," suddenly paused with his hand up and exclaimed: "Sanctified catfish! Boys, it's Sunday!"

It was. We had been sitting there among those nice people throughout the calm Sabbath afternoon playing a wicked game of "draughts." After two weeks among the Mohammedans and other heathen, with every day a working day and the English Sunday a dead letter, we had lost all trace of dates. Mr. Peasley said that if any one had asked him the day of the week he would have guessed Wednesday.

This unfortunate incident helped to deepen and solidify the dark suspicion with which we, as Americans, were regarded by the contingent from Great Britain. If our conduct had been exemplary we could not have cleared away this suspicion, but after the domino debauch we were set down as hopeless. The middle class English guard their social status very carefully, and you can't blame them. It is a tender and uncertain growth that requires looking after all the time. If they did not water it and prune it and set it out in the sunshine every day it would soon wither back to its original stalk.

Did you ever come across a bunch of melancholy pilgrims from the suburban villas and the dull gray provincial towns of dear old England? Did you ever observe the frightened manner in which they hold aloof from Germans, Americans, Bedouins, Turks and other foreigners? They fear if they drift into friendly relationship with people they meet while traveling, later on some of these chance acquaintances may look them up at Birmingham or Stoke-on-Trent and expect to be entertained at the foundry.

"BOYS, IT'S SUNDAY!"

A large majority of our fellow passengers from Luxor to Assouan were of elderly pattern. We estimated the average age to be about eighty-three. Mr. Peasley said an irreverent thing about these venerable tourists.

"Why do these people come all the way to Egypt to look at the ruins?" he asked. "Why don't they stay at home and look at one another?"

We rebuked him for saying it, but somehow or other these rebukes never seemed to have any permanent restraining effect.

Our boat arrived at Assonan one morning accompanied by a sandstorm and a cold wave. The Cataract hotel stood on a promontory overlooking a new kind of Nile—a swift and narrow stream studded with gleaming bowlders of granite. We liked Assouan because the weather was ideal (after the sandstorm ran out of sand), the hotel was the best we had found in Egypt and there were so few antiques that sightseeing became a pleasure. Besides, after one has been to Luxor anything in the way of ancient temples is about as much of a comedown as turkey hash the day after Thanksgiving.

Here, on the border of Nubia, we began to get glimpses of real Africa. We rode on camels to a desert camp of hilarious Bisharins. They are the gypsies of Nubia—dress their hair with mud instead of bay rum and reside under a patch of gunnysacks propped up by two sticks. On the hills back of the town we saw the barracks where the English army gathered itself to move south against the Mandists. We were invited to go out in the moonlight and hunt hyenas, but did not think it right to kill off all the native game.

The big exhibit at Assouan and one of the great engineering achievements of modern times is the dam across the Nile. It is a solid wall of granite, a mile and a quarter long, 100 feet high in places and 88 feet through the base, and it looks larger than it sounds. We went across it on a push car after taking a boat ride in the reservoir basin, which is said to contain 234,000,000 gallons of water. This estimate is correct as nearly as we could figure it. The dam is about four miles above the town. We rode up on a dummy train, with cars almost as large as Saratoga trunks, and came back in a small boat. We shot the rapids, just for excitement, and after we had caved in the bottom of the boat and stopped an hour for repairs we decided that we had stored up enough excitement, so after that we followed the more placid waters.

The black boatmen had a weird chant which they repeated over and over, keeping time with the stroke. It was a combination of Egyptian melody and American college yell, and ran as follows:

Hep! Hep! Horay!
Hep! Hep! Horay!
Hep! Hep! Horay!
All right! Thank you!

This effort represented their sum total of English, and they were very proud of it, and we liked it, too—that is, the first million times. After that the charm of novelty was largely dissipated.

Many people visited Assouan on account of the kiln dried atmosphere, which is supposed to have a discouraging effect on rheumatism and other ailments that flourish in a damp climate. Assouan is as dry as Pittsburg on Sunday. It is surrounded by desert, and the sun always seems to be working overtime. The traveler who does much rambling out of doors gradually assumes the brown and papery complexion of a royal mummy, his lips become parched and flaky, and he feels like a grocery store herring, which, it is believed, is about the driest thing on record.

We did love Assouan. Coming back from a camel ride, with a choppy sea on, gazing through the heat waves at the tufted palms and the shimmering white walls, we would know that there was ice only a mile ahead of us, and then our love for Assouan would become too deep for words.

Burton Holmes, the eminent lecturer and travelogue specialist, was lying up at Assouan, having a tiresome argument with the germ that invented malaria. He had come up the Nile in a deep draught boat and had succeeded in finding many sand bars that other voyagers had overlooked. Just below Assouan the boat wedged itself into the mud and could not be floated until thirty natives, summoned from the surrounding country, had waded underneath and "boosted" all afternoon. When it came time to pay the men the captain of the boat said to Mr. Holmes: "What do you think? They demand 8 shillings."

"It is an outrage," said Mr. Holmes. "Eight shillings is $2. Even in America I can get union labor for $2 a day. There are thirty of them. Couldn't we compromise for a lump sum of $50?"

"You do not understand," said the captain. "We are asked to pay 8 shillings for the whole crowd. I think that six would be enough."

Whereupon Mr. Holmes gave them 10 shillings, or 8 1-3 cents each, and as he sailed away the grateful assemblage gave three rousing cheers for Mr. Rockefeller.

When we left Assouan we scooted by rail direct to Cairo, and in a few days were headed for home, by way of Italy. France and England, all of them seeming painfully modern after our sojourn in Egypt.

It is customary in winding up a series of letters to draw certain profound conclusions and give hints to travelers who may hope to follow the same beaten path. Fortunately, Mr. Peasley had done this for us. He promised a real estate agent in Fairfield, Ia., that he would let him know about Egypt. One night in Assouan he read to us the letter to his friend, and we borrowed it:

Assouan, Some Time in April.

—Deloss M. Gifford, Fairfield, Iowa, U. S. A.

My Dear Giff:—I have gone as far up the Nile as my time and letter of credit will permit. At 8 a. m. tomorrow I turn my face toward the only country on earth where a man can get a steak that hasn't got goo poured all over it. Meet me at the station with a pie. Tell mother I am coming home to eat.

Do I like Egypt? Yes—because now I will be satisfied with Iowa. Only I'm afraid that when I go back and see 160 acres of corn in one field I won't believe it. Egypt is a wonderful country, but very small for its age. It is about as wide as the court house square, but it seemed to me at least 10,000 miles long, as we have been two weeks getting to the First cataract. Most of the natives are farmers. The hard working tenant gets one-tenth of the crop every year and if he looks up to see the steamboats go by he is docked. All Egyptians who are not farmers are robbers. The farmers live on the river. All other natives live on the tourist.

I have seen so many tombs and crypts and family vaults that I am ashamed to look an undertaker in the face. For three weeks I have tried to let on to pretend to make a bluff at being deeply interested in these open graves. Other people gushed about them and I was afraid that if I didn't trail along and show some sentimental interest they might suspect that I was from Iowa and was shy on soulfulness. I'll say this much, however—I'm mighty glad I've seen them because now I'll never have to look at them again.

Egypt is something like the old settler—you'd like to roast him and call him down, but you hate to jump on anything so venerable and weak. Egypt is so old that you get the headache trying to think back. Egypt had gone through forty changes of administration and was on the down grade before Iowa was staked out.

The principal products of this country are insects, dust, guides and fake curios. I got my share of each. I am glad I came, and I may want to return some day, but not until I have worked the sand out of my ears and taken in two or three county fairs. I have been walking down the main aisle with my hat in my hand so long that now I am ready for something lively.

Americans are popular in Egypt, during business hours. Have not been showered with social attentions, but I am always comforted by the thought that the exclusive foreign set cannot say anything about me that I haven't already said about it. Of course, we could retaliate in proper fashion if we could lure the foreigners out to Iowa, but that seems out of the question. They think Iowa is in South America.

I shall mail this letter and then chase it all the way home.

Give my love to everybody, whether I know them or not. Yours,

PEASLEY.

P. S.—Open some preserves.

Not a comprehensive review of the fruits of our journey and yet fairly accurate.

(The end.)

"YOU DISCOVER EVERY ONE OF HIS SHINING FAULTS

"HE WAS NOT FEAZED."

The Housekeeper's Cleaning-Up Day

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Not clearing up days in the sense of bad weather that brightens to good. Whenever we have a spell of really inclement weather, and seem to be living under a very wet part of the sky, we are much uplifted to see the sun come out. Our spirits rise when the blue heaven above us is a serene dome, when the clouds are mere ribbons of fleece and feathery spray, and the air is soft as a mother's kiss. But most of us have enough philosophy not to fret though the weather is misbehaving. Our opinion or wish is not taken into account in the matter, and though the rain fall or the sun shine, we have only to do our work. Into each life some rain must fall, the poet sings, and tears about inopportune rain are too idle for grown folk.

But—there are clearing up days in the housekeeper's calendar that cannot be shirked or evaded. Women rather enjoy them. Men loathe them unspeakably. If by some happy chance a man's business trip synchronizes with his wife's clearing up days, the peace of the home is safeguarded and the troublesome labor is simplified. When a man is at home, there must be dinner properly served. A woman, having no man, husband, father or son, on her hands, gets on very well with a bite in the pantry and a cup of tea during the stress of a clearing up campaign.

She begins perhaps with the garret or with the storeroom, that is the garret's present day substitute. Every garment is to be looked over, shaken out and freed from peril of the lurking moth. When the room is absolutely bare, and has been thoroughly scrubbed, it is further disinfected by the slow burning of a sulphur candle. Shut up any room hermetically for six or seven hours, and set a burning sulphur candle therein, and you may say good-by to vermin of a llsorts, to all predatory insect life in fact, for a good many months to come.

When every article has been dusted renovated and put into place, when trunks have been repacked, their folded contents assorted, and themselves accurately labeled, the garret is in order. "It shall never be in heap again," sighs the tired but complacent matron, and she means what she says.

But life will be too much for her. Another twelvemonth will see the same confusion, the same disarray, the same necessity for another clearing up and setting to rights. Only the phenomenal woman is able to keep in order as well as to put in order, and she generally does it at the sacrifice of much tissue and the cost of much talk and temper. Heaven pity those who dwell under the roof of a martinet whose fetich is system. For better a little comfortable jumbling up of properties by the way, and a radical rearrangement at appropriate intervals. Nature shows us the good sense of this method. Observe the spells of idle languor and the amazing energy of her occasional cyclones and cloudbursts, destructive at the moment, yet apt to be beneficial in the long run!

* * *

The clearing up day when a woman of large correspondence attacks her plethoric desk is, for her at least, somewhat formidable. All the letters she has been foolishly keeping because she hated to destroy them, for sentimental or for practical reasons, are there, to be reread, to be considered, to be torn to bits or burned to ashes. If only we women could learn that accumulations of letters are generally a great mistake, we would save ourselves time and pains in the end. When ordinary letters have been answered, they should be consigned in fragments to the waste basket and go from there to the furnace. But a letter has in it so much that is vital, it so speaks of some dear one, so breathes the perfume of love, that one hesitates to destroy it, and instead packs it into a drawer or pigeonhole and leaves it for a future day.

There are, of course, letters that should never be destroyed. They are sent to one in the crucial hour of grief or the radiant hour of joy, and they should be kept among our treasures. These letters are few and far between.

For a certain length of time business papers should be preserved. Anything in the nature of a contract should be filed with care and placed in some designated receptacle. Bills and receipts are not to be left to chance. Women should cultivate the business sense and care for important papers as a man cares for them in his office. And as the merchant takes stock at a stated annual period, so should the gentlewoman at home go over her assets and obligations once a year and make clearing up day that will set a troubled conscience at rest.

The top drawer is another opportunity for painstaking. What impish spirit gets into a top drawer that it defies the most punctilious and outrages the most fastidious, by its aspect of wild and incoherent untidiness? Dedicated to the dainty and delicate effloresence of the toilette, to laces and collars and belts and kerchiefs, to odds and ends of jewelry worn daily and never locked up in a safe, to perfumed sachets and cobwebby chiffons, it fairly riots in confusion. As everyone knows, it ought to be immaculate as snow, and precise as a Quaker spinster.

But is it? Are gloves always pulled smoothly to their length, and decorously laid away in boxes? Are handkerchiefs always arranged in neat piles? Are stocks and fichus and ruches and frills where they should be? I share the high ideals of the neatest of my sex, and admire the finest theories, but when it is a question of the top drawer, I am fain to believe in a wicked fairy who tosses and tumbles one's things at her own sweet will, in the dead of the night, or in the silence of noonday.

* * *

The true value of the clearing up day is in its bringing to light the lost and mislaid articles which have baffled the searcher's endeavors for months. Things that we prized have vanished from our sight. They are not to be found. We do our very best, but they are nowhere in evidence. Perhaps we give them up in despair and buy something else to serve the purpose. Lo and behold! when we clear up, forth they spring, smiling into our amazed faces, as if they were things animate and sentient. Who has not had this experience? Hence comes, on the opposite side, the well known adage that three removes are as good as a fire; each remove unearthing much carefully sheltered rubbish, that is at last ruefully dispensed with to the lightening of the luggage we all carry on the road.

Impedimenta, the old Romans called the baggage trains that encumbered an advacing army. The word is itself a picture. Our clearing up days help us to decide what portion of our goods is impedimenta; what portion belongs to our real wealth.

A child is never quite so happy as when permitted to hang on the edge of such a day as I have described. She carries off much treasure trove. Faded ribbons, bits of muslin and silk, discarded trinkets, engraved devices cut from note paper, all sorts of flotsam and jetsam fill her with a sense of extreme delight. She loves to help, and if her help be a hinderance, the mother should not tell her so. Think backward to the bygone years. When you were a child what unalloyed bliss was yours if you were permitted to be either on the outer rim or in the very heart's core of a genuine old-fashioned clearing up day. Then hesitate before you deny this bliss to the dimpled maiden at your side.